

MINUTES

**Quarterly Meeting of the
MISSOURI VETERANS COMMISSION
Held, pursuant to notice
Tuesday, July 11, 2006 — 10:00 AM
State Veterans Cemetery – Higginsville
20106 Business Hwy 13,
Higginsville, Missouri**

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Missouri Military Funeral Honors Presentation
- B. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance
- C. Roll Call
In attendance: **Chairman Carson Ross; Vice Chairman Joe Frank; Member Bernadette Miller; Member General Arvid West**
Absent: **Member Lee Kling**
- C. Introductions
Guests and staff present.
 - 1. Guest: **Dr. Peter Almenoff**, M.D., VISN 15 Network Director, VA Heartland Network; **Stephen Gaither**, Public Relations, VA Medical Center Columbia; **State Representative Mike McGhee**, District 122; **Richard Heigert**, President MAVO; **James Whitfield**, Western Area Coordinator, MO Military Funeral Honors Program; **Col. Wayne Medley**, MO Military Funeral Honors Program; **Emmett Fairfax**, Past Chairman MVC; **Judy Noland**, American Legion Ladies Auxiliary; **Larry Noland**, American Legion; **Charles Fisher**, American Legion; **David Unterwagner**, Assistant Director, VA Regional Office St. Louis; **Dorothy Torrence**, Associate Director of Patient Care Services VAMCKC; **Paul Connors**, VFW; **Kathy Lee**, VFW; **Clyde Collins**, Casualty Assistance Officer, Whiteman Air force Base; **Ted Knox**, Volunteer Assistant Higginsville Cemetery; **Don Knehans**, Higginsville Chamber of Commerce; **Bill Kolas**, Mayor City of Higginsville; **James Nuelle**, American Legion Post 223; **Al Dieckhoff**, American Legion Post 223; **Todd Malone**, Vantage Products Corporation
 - 2. Staff: **Hal Dulle**, Acting Executive Director; **Jill Talken**, Executive Secretary; **Jess Rasmussen**, Director Higginsville Cemetery; **Jerry Quigley**, Director Jacksonville Cemetery; **Anne Payne**, Superintendent of Homes; **Tim Norton**, Director of Planning and Property Management; **Stan Baughn**, Director Service to Veterans Program; **Karen Etzler**, Veteran Service Officer; **Larry Montandon**, Director Springfield Cemetery; **Chuck Wooten**, MVC

3. Approval of April 19, 2006 Commission Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Miller made a motion to accept the minutes and Commissioner West seconded the motion. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as recorded.

II. OLD BUSINESS:

Management Report: Acting Executive Director Comments: Hal Dulle

- Commission received \$3.7 million for the Homes Program for overtime
- 8.50 FTE added to Homes Program \$202,369 – Nursing Assistants
- 7 FTE added to STV Program \$211,332 PS + \$53,365 E&E = \$264,697
- 1.50 FTE for Veterans Ombudsman Program
- Backhoe for Springfield Cemetery \$62,000
- Pharmacy, Medical, Food increase for Homes - \$1,523,805 (12% pharmacy increase)
- All state employees will receive a 4% increase and RN's will receive an additional 8%
- Six of the seven Missouri Veterans Homes have received their annual federal regulatory surveys and were deficiency free for the second year in a row. The Veterans Home in Cape Girardeau was surveyed in June no final report at this time
- HB978 – Vietnam War Medallion Program. The Commission is responsible for the soliciting for the design of the medal/medallion and certificate.
- Commission is working with Department of Social Services on identifying veterans on Medicare to make sure they are receiving veterans benefits.
- Recognized Richard Heigert, Chairman MAVO for his hardwork
- Attended service for active duty Marine killed in Iraq at the Jacksonville Veterans Cemetery. Positive feedback on the facility and service provided. Congratulations to Jerry Quigley!

Missouri Veterans Homes: Anne Payne, Superintendent of Homes

- Average Daily Census 1,165 residents
- Waiting List 1,053
- Donations \$579,727
- Volunteer Hours 129,120
- Resident/Family Satisfaction Survey Results (Respondents rated overall satisfaction with their nursing facility)

MVC (2006) – 93%
National (2005) – 83%

- Top Five Diagnoses – A majority of residents have multiple diagnoses; Percent of residents is based on a census of 1135
Hypertension – 51%
Alzheimer/Dementia – 42%
Depression – 28%
Diabetes – 25%
ASHD – 20%
- Acuity target this fiscal year is 87% occupancy at Homes based on level of care as needed.

Construction Update: Tim Norton, Director of Planning and Property Management

- Ft. Leonard Wood Veterans Cemetery: currently in the process of selecting a design
- Warrensburg and Cameron Veterans Homes, hot water upgrades:
Cameron awarded to Kansas City Mechanical, completion date mid July 2006
Warrensburg awarded to Rodgers Enterprises, project completed
- Cape Girardeau Veterans Home, HAVC project: time extension, anticipate completion November 1st.
- Mexico Veterans Home, floor replacement: pre-bid meeting July 5th
- Cape Girardeau Veterans Home, roof replacement: pre-bid meeting June 12th
- Cameron parking: pre-bid meeting within next few weeks, add 27 parking spaces, plus 4 handicap spaces
- St. Louis Veterans Home, electrical upgrades: Pre-bid meeting June 8th
- St. Louis Veterans Home, downspouts to storm drains: pre-construction meeting June 8th, project completion September 27th, 2006
- Mexico Veterans Home, make-up units: construction begin June 28th, completion date within 45 days
- Recently visited with VA regarding adding additional space to CBOC's at St. Louis (7,000 to 12,000 sq. ft.) and Cape Girardeau (4,000 sq. ft.). VA is working on funding issue.

Service to Veterans Program: Stan Baughn, Executive Director

- Karen Etzler, State of Missouri Woman Veteran Coordinator, recently attended with Commissioner Bernadette Miller Women Veterans Week in Branson and the National Association of State Women Veterans Coordinators Conference held in Reno. 2007 Conference to be held in Branson. Focus – making women aware they veterans and that they are eligible for benefits. Over 34,000 women veterans in Missouri. Has sent out 274 letters and registered 139 members. Outreach efforts include: newsletter, website, fairs and events.
- STV Grants request are being evaluated and will determine the funding level. Met with Service Organizations and is putting together an activity report for the next Commission meeting.
- Veteran Ombudsman Program has raised over \$300,000 in private donations to go towards Operation Outreach. 6th “Support our Troops” event planned for August 5th, 2006 at the State Capitol. Commissioner Miller requested a report with breakdown of # cases and \$ awarded for future meetings.
- Attended with Bonnie McNeill-Boyt, Training Technician the National Association of County Veteran Service Officers in Reno
- Service to Veterans training conference tentatively scheduled for first week in October
- Started feasibility study to determine if a total reorganization of the Service to Veterans Program is warranted
- Springfield STV office relocated to Kansas Expressway
- FY07 Budget adds 6 new Service Officers, analyzing needed coverage
- Minority Veterans Benefit Coordinator continues to develop, clarify and expand in the KC area. She has developed a comprehensive plan to reach minority veteran.
- Benefits Awareness Program is still providing outreach opportunities to communities around Missouri. July 15th Veterans Benefit Resource Fair in Joplin. Over 10,000 veterans registered at Resource Fair events and over 9,000 calls to the toll free line.
- Missouri Military Family Relief Fund Committee has reviewed nine (9) requests. Five (5) applications have been approved and four (4) denials.
- Attended Governor’s Advisory Council of Veterans Affairs. Commissioner West serves as an Ex-Officio member on the Council. Commissioner West reported on the Subcommittees and the timeline – Three Subcommittee Meetings between August & October. Full meeting in November and a complete report to the Governor in December. Three vacancies on the Council.

Cemeteries Update: Jess Rasmussen, Director Higginsville Cemetery

- Completed 3,905 burials and 13,130 pre-certifications
- State of Iowa using Missouri as model
- Larry Montandon new Cemetery Director Springfield
- Recognized Ted Knots for his volunteer hours at the Higginsville Cemetery

III. NEW BUSINESS:

Dr. Peter L. Almenoff, M.D., F.C.C.P., - VISN 15 Network Director for the VA Heartland Network

- Rand Corporation study affirms VA is rated high in delivering healthcare
- University of Michigan satisfaction survey shows VISN 15 leading in country for the sixth straight year in private sector for healthcare
- VA receives 2006 Innovations in Government Award
- VISN 15 – Provides health care coverage for six (6) states:
AR, IL, IN, KS, KY, MO
The VA Heartland Network (VISN 15) is composed of the nine VA Medical Facilities: Kansas, Missouri, and Southern Illinois area
41-42 outpatient clinics (seven of these located at Veterans Homes in Missouri)
Serving over 250,000 veterans and employing more than 7,500 employees.
- Pharmaceutical Program – Working with State Homes
- OEF & OIF Veterans eligible to enroll in VA Healthcare System for two years from date of returning home. Over 21,000 soldiers deployed from KS & MO and 4,600 are being treated
- Severely injured soldiers can go directly to one of the four (4) Trauma Centers: Richmond, Tampa, Minneapolis and Palo Alto. St. Louis is a second unit level Trauma Center
- Telemedicine – growth in specialized care through telemedicine technology, VA showing increase from 200 visits in 2002 to today projections at 19,000 visits
- Stolen laptop computer ongoing investigation
- Budget – estimating an 8% increase nationwide
- Harry S. Truman Memorial - Director position still vacant
- CARES Commission – cost benefits analysis completed determined John J. Pershing VA Medical Center remain open, waiting final decision from Washington, DC

- Electronic Waiting List – working on waiting list currently at 1,100 growth is at 2%
- CBOC's – working to add additional outpatient space needed at Kansas City Medical Center, St. Louis Clinic, Cape Girardeau Clinic and adding a new clinic in Jefferson City
- Working on St. Louis VA Medical Center -Jefferson Barracks expansion project

State Representative Mike McGhee – District 122

- Vietnam Medal/Medallion Program passed the legislature this session, feels appropriate to use “ Welcome Home” on the medal
- Visited with soldiers at Landstuhl Medical Center in Germany

David Unterwagner – Assistant Director, St. Louis VA Regional Office

- Director St. Louis VA Regional Office working in Washington, DC on VETSNET a benefits delivery system project.
- Department of Veterans Affairs – divided into three programs
VA Health Administration
National Cemetery Administration
Veteran Benefits Administration (St. Louis VA Regional Office) – provides educational, compensation and pension benefits to 15 states

Richard Heigert – Chairman MAVO

- Legislative Committee met to discuss legislative priorities for 2007. Working on three year plan.
- Developed Legislative Questionnaire for mailing to legislative contenders after the primary election
- MAVO working to put on a Veterans Symposium during the STV Conference

NEXT MEETING

The next Commission meeting will be at the Mexico Veterans Home.

The Commission closed the meeting to conduct an executive session for the purpose to discuss personnel matters pursuant to Section 610.021, Subsection (3) RSMo.

The meeting was reopened.

With no further business before the Commission the meeting was adjourned.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hal J. Dulle", is centered on the page.

Hal J. Dulle, Secretary